

Ruins of Mill with Mill House (restored),
Occoquan, Prince William County,
Virginia

HABS No. VA-576

HABS
VA
76-0CCO,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington 25, D. C.

Ruins of Mill with Mill House (restored),
Occoquan, Prince William County
Virginia

HABS No. VA-576

HABS

VA

76-0000.

RUINS of MERCHANT'S GRIST MILL

Owner: Alexandria Water Works

Address: Occoquan River, in proximity to bridge

Occupant and Use: Mill House reported built in 1793, now reconstructed for office.

Description: Fieldstone and brick, corner section of mill standing and slowly crumbling away. One-and-a-half-storied office stands southward.

Historical Data: Year of erection: About 1759 (with additions and alterations). Built for (first owner): John Ballendine who also operated a nearby iron foundry. After ten years of effort he sold out and moved to Little Falls where he operated a sawmill. Destroyed 1924.

Significance: This appears to have been the structure owned in the late 18th century by Thomas Ellicott and developed by him into a mill of international fame. Ellicott improved upon the inventions of Oliver Evans, Millwright of Philadelphia, who assisted George Washington in the construction of the mill at Mount Vernon. Ellicott's mill had three water wheels and six pairs of stones and was oriented so that wheat could be delivered by ship or wagon. The description of his masterpiece appeared in the Repertory of Arts and Manufactures: from Transactions of the Philosophical Societies of All Nations, published in London, 1796. (Vol. IV, pp 319-328, with engraved plate). See also John Davis, Travels of Four Years and a Half in the United States of America during 1798, 1799, 1800, 1801, and 1802, New York 1909.

References: Prepared by Russell Jones and Worth Bailey, HABS, National Park Service, April, 1959.

Approved: _____

Dick Suthon
Chief Architect

Date

7/9/59